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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 000195

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/MAG, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/05/2019
TAGS: [PBTS](#) [PGOV](#) [WI](#) [UNSC](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: MOROCCO'S TALLY OF COUNTRIES REJECTING/SUPPORTING
RECOGNITION OF INDEPENDENT SAHARA

REF: RABAT 0512

Classified By: A/DCM Craig Karp for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION: Morocco continues to work to persuade countries around the globe to de-recognize the Polisario Front's declared Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, or at least freeze relations, beyond which they want countries to recognize Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara. It seems to be the principal focus of Moroccan diplomacy and has had some success, but it has been slow and piecemeal. By their own count, the majority of members of the United Nations (110 out of 150) do not recognize SADR, nor do any Arab countries other than Algeria. At the UN, the Polisario does not have a formal observer status, like the PLO, but has an informal status as a movement, they maintain. We cannot confirm the GOM's judgments, but they appear broadly to conform to what we know. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) On March 6, in response to an Embassy, Rabat request, the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) provided us with a list of countries that do not recognize the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), those that do, and those that recently changed their position to none recognition. According to this list, the majority of members of the United Nations (110 out of 150) do not recognize SADR. The record also indicates there are currently 40 countries who recognize the SADR. Probably owing mostly to Moroccan diplomatic efforts, 41 countries which previously recognized the SADR withdrew their recognition and froze their relations with the SADR. Morocco's effort to secure recognition of its claims to Western Sahara (or at least the non-recognition of the SADR) by other countries represents Morocco's dominant foreign policy objective, which largely shapes its external relations with countries.

13. (U) There are 110 countries, including most countries on the UN Security Council, who have never recognized the SADR, including the following:

Africa: Cameroon, Central Africa, Comoros Islands, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Libya (recognizes the Polisario but not the SADR), Niger, Republic Democratic Congo, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia.

Americans and Caribbean: Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Chili, and the United States.

Asia and Oceania/Pacific: Saudi Arabia, Australia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, China, South Korea, United Arab Emirates, Fiji, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Micronesia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Uzbekistan, Palau, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Turkmenistan.

Europe: Germany, Andorra, Austria, Belorussia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldavia, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Great Britain, Russia, St. Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Turkey, Ukraine and The Vatican.

¶4. (U) The below listed 41 countries previously recognized the SADR but changed their stance by either withdrawing recognition or freezing relations with the SADR.

Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Congo, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, St. Thomas and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Chad, and Togo.

Asia and Pacific Ocean: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Solomon Islands, India, Iran, Kiribati, Laos, Nauru, Tuvalu, Syria, Vanuatu, Yemen and Vietnam.

Europe: Albania, and Serbia.

South, Central America and the Caribbean: Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominique, Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, St. Lucia.

¶5. (U) Countries who currently recognize the SADR include:

Africa: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia,

Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Asia and Pacific Ocean: East Timor, Papua New Guinea and North Korea.

South, Central America and the Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Cuba, Equator, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Surinam, Trinity and Tobago, Venezuela, and Uruguay.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: Getting other countries to recognize its sovereignty over Western Sahara, or to abstain from taking a position on Western Sahara, has been a dominant focus of Morocco's diplomatic efforts since 1975, when the Spanish vacated Western Sahara. Morocco's increased diplomatic efforts, particularly over the last nine years, appear to have been paying off, albeit slowly. Since 2000, 23 countries have rescinded or frozen their relationship with the SADR. Morocco appears to have placed particular emphasis on Africa with corresponding success. Kenya's reversal of its recognition of SADR in 2007 was seen as a particular coup for Morocco in recent years. As an example of their comprehensive approach to this quest, Morocco provided weapons that were used to defeat putschists in the Comoros in 2008 (reftel), which directly preceded a shift by neighboring and heavily engaged Seychelles. END COMMENT.

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